(d) the details of the study made in that regard and the drilling programme proposed by Government off the Godavari Krishna basin;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The drilling activities have been undertaken in three prospects in deep water areas of K.G. basin at an estimated cost of Rs. 90.70 crores. Two exploratory wells have been drilled out of which one has been found to be hydrocarbon bearing. The third well is under drilling.

(c) The commercial viability of the prospect would be assessed depending on its size, established reserves, rate of return etc.

(d) Based on interpretation of 2D & 3D seismic data, two more locations have been identified for drilling and one location is under drilling.

Government of India has offered 5 deep water blocks falling in K.G. Basin for exploration under New Exploration Licensing Policy.

Case on Diesel

1047. HRI Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:
SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH:
SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposed to impose Rupee one cess on diesel to fund highway project;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, how will resources be found for financing 7200 km. highway project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) In the Union Budget 1999-2000, an additional duty of Re. 1/litre on imported and domestic HSD has been imposed w.e.f. the midnight of 27th/28th February, 1999. It has been proposed to allocate half of the duty to support the initiatives in rural development and social sectors. The other portion of 50 paise of this duty as also the duty of Re. 1 per litre leived with effect from 2.6.1998 will be converted into a statutory cess and transferred to the Central Road Fund. 30% of the Fund will be transferred to the State Governments for development and maintenance of State Roads. The balance amount will be utilised for development and maintenance of National highways and express-ways and by the Ministry of Railways for construction of Railways over-bridges and Railways safety works at unmanned Railways crossings.

Oil Expolration West Bengal

1048. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRIMATI CHANDRAKAL PANDEY:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item "Package for Bengal announced" appearing in Business Standard, Calcutta dated 11th Febrary, 1999 regarding oil exploration work in eight fields in West Bengal.

(b) if so, the location of the fields identified in West Bengal;

(c) whether exploration work would start by 10th May in all the fields simultaneously; if so, the details of the mobilisation work undertaken so far by ONGC; and

(d) the estimated completion period for test drilling and production testing in each field?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a)